

Briton faces quiz over US gun camp

[James Langton in New York](#) Friday 28 December 2001 01:00

A British bodyguard instructor is to be questioned by the Crown Prosecution Service over allegations that he ran weapons training camps for Islamic militants in the United States.

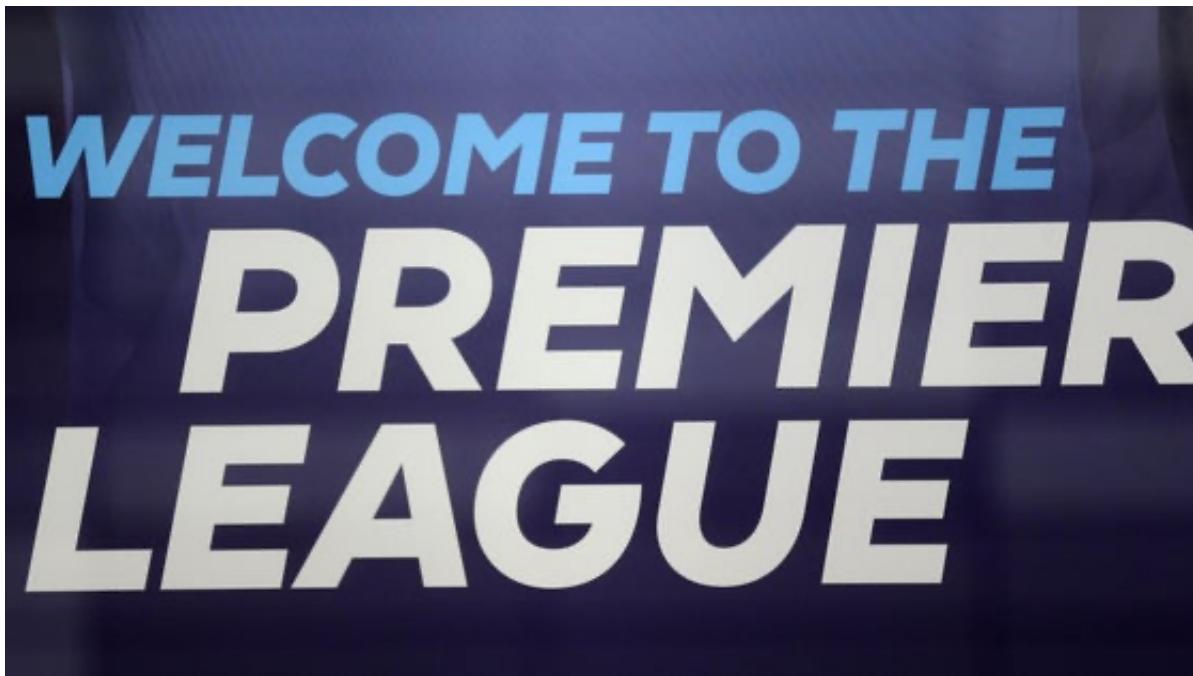
A CPS spokesman said last night that authorities wanted to contact Mark Yates about his alleged involvement in the "Ultimate Jihad Challenge," which claimed to offer "live fire" training in secret American camps.

They suspect the courses were run from the Ground Zero firearms training camp outside Marion, Alabama, where Yates is operations and training director. The camp is owned by Berkeley & Associates, an American company which describes itself as an associate of Trans Global Security International, Yates' company in north-west England.

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The Alabama camp offers a £1,200 five-day "terrorist awareness program" introduced after the World Trade Center attacks and quotes Yates on its website as saying "no expense has been spared in the creation of a state of the art, world-class mission specific training facilities". It includes techniques used by the SAS, with sub-machinegun ranges and a "killing house" used to practice hostage rescues. Yates adds: "Alabama is only eight hours flying time from the United Kingdom." The CPS told the American TV network NBC last night that Yates "has not been questioned as yet, but there are plans to do so soon".

Allegations that Yates was involved in "Ultimate Jihad Challenge" are understood to have been made by Sulayman Bilal Zain-ul-abidin , the founder of Sakina Security, which first offered the training camps.

Zain-ul-abidin has been in custody since 1 October under the Prevention of

Terrorism Act on a charge of "providing instructional training in the making or use of firearms, explosives or chemical, biological or nuclear weapons".

Sakina Security Services claimed to offer bodyguard training in high-risk areas such as the former Soviet Union and courses in selfdefenceand hand-to-hand combat for Muslims at "Ultimate Jihad Challenge".

It promised to instruct British Muslims in the "art of bone breaking" and how to "improvise explosive devices". Participants would be sent to an unidentified camp in America where they would fire up to 3,000 rounds in weapons training.

The Sunday Telegraph reported last month that Zain-ul-abidin, who is also known as Frank Etim, attended a military training course run by Yates several years ago at a secret camp in Wales in which young Muslims were taught to use Uzi machineguns.

Yates is described as a flamboyant figure from the "Men In Black" school VIP protection which advocates a show of force, using bodyguards dressed in dark suits and mirrored sunglasses.

He denied any involvement with Sakina to NBC, saying the first he heard of the organisation was the Sunday Telegraph article. "We had no agreements, no arrangements," he said.

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